

1 Peter 2:4-10

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Rejection

Intro – Have you ever faced rejection?

Big or small. How did it feel? Do you remember what it was like?...

Rejection is crippling. Rejection can cause us to question our value as a person. Rejection can leave us depressed and uncertain. We can lose our confidence and our joy in life when we face rejection.

Yet, if we are members of the church of God, our example to follow is one of rejection. Verse 4:

4As you come to him, the living Stone—rejected by humans but chosen by God and precious to him

In this passage from 1 Peter 2, Peter calls us to come to Jesus, the living stone, who has been rejected by humans but was chosen by God. Being a member of Christ's body, a member of God's church, means we come to Jesus, the one **rejected** by people, but chosen by God.

Cornerstone

Peter goes on to talk about Jesus as the precious stone, the cornerstone. Verse 6:

“6For in Scripture it says: “See, I lay a stone in Zion, a chosen and precious cornerstone...”

Jesus is the corner stone – the cornerstone was the first stone to be laid in a building. It was the stone that was carefully laid on the first corner, and every part of the building was measured off that one stone. So that stone had to be perfect. Jesus is that corner stone, the foundation stone, of God's living temple, and we are the living stones that he builds his temple with.

In the Old Testament, under the Old Covenant, God came to meet with his people **in** the temple, in a physical building. But now, through Jesus, there is a new temple - Jesus himself. And WE are members of his body. And so now, WE, as members of his body, are part of that temple. Being a member of Christ's body means that you are part of the LIVING temple of God. We are LIVING stones.

Living stones

Verse 5:

5you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood...

We are **living** stones. And we follow the line of Jesus, the corner stone, the foundation stone. We line ourselves up with him, who was rejected by people, but chosen by God.

We line ourselves up with Jesus, not this world. Membership in God's church is about being a living part of **His** body, his temple, and **His** priesthood. Not about belonging to this world. And that's really where Peter is heading with this passage – to encourage us to think about our rejection **by** this world, but also our rejection **of** this world – rejecting the wealth and power and seduction of this world, and instead lining ourselves up with Jesus, our cornerstone.

So what does that look like?

Members – a work in progress

Ill – work in progress

Example: Do you have any works in progress? Something that you've started and not yet finished? (Example?)

Verse 5 again:

5you also, like living stones, **are being built** into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God...

First of all, God **is building** us into that spiritual house. We are a work in progress. It's happening today. It's not complete. Each day, God continues to build his church, to build his people. By His Spirit, God is working in us. Remember last week, we talked about being a member of Christ's body is about having his Holy Spirit living in us. That's how God's builds us each day.

Secondly, it's HIS work. **God** is doing the work of building us into his temple. God is the only one able to change us and build us. We need to let Him do the work in us. We need to let Him change us.

And third, we are called to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God – we are called to make **spiritual** sacrifices. Now that Jesus has laid down his life as the perfect sacrifice, we don't need to make sacrifices to pay for our sin. Jesus has already made the sacrifice for our sin. Instead, we make **spiritual** sacrifices. What is a spiritual sacrifice? Praise, Thanksgiving, Repentance, we sacrifice our own desires for the desires of God. We sacrifice our worldly goals for our heavenly goal.

So as members of God's church, as members of Christ's body, we are a work in progress. We are being built into a spiritual house BY God and FOR God, sacrificing TO God.

But what is our ***purpose*** in this? What is our ***purpose*** as members of God's church? What is our ***purpose*** in being built up by God?

Members – with a purpose

III – defining purpose

Picture: Do you know what this is? What is it's purpose?

It's a life raft bullet hole plug! Sometimes it's hard to know something's purpose.

What about us? As members of God's church, what is ***our*** purpose? Listen again to verse 9:

9But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession...

1. **We are chosen by God.** We didn't choose him. He chose us. So it's not really about OUR purpose, it's about HIS purpose FOR us.
2. **He made us his royal priesthood.** We are priests of the King. Priests serve and worship. He chose us all TO BE PRIESTS. We are all priests before him, able to speak directly with him and to bring our spiritual sacrifices to him. No one stands between God and us anymore.
3. **And we are a holy nation** – Holy just means “set apart” – we are set apart as a nation – as one body – as his church, for Him. We line ourselves up with Jesus, not with the world. We belong to Him, not the world. Our purpose is to be set apart for ***His*** purposes.
4. We are God's special possession. That's really is mazing isn't it? We are God's special, or treasured possession. We are ***His*** treasure.

III – car – Example: Do you have a special possession? For me, it used to be my cars. This was my most special possession...

Now I could say I treasure my wife the most, or my children, but they're not ***possessions***. They don't ***belong*** to me. But we BELONG to God. Being a member of God's church means we ***belong*** to him, and we His ***special*** possession. He loves us enough to send his one and only Son to die for us. We belong to him, not the world. The world may reject us, we may face rejection from the people of this world, but we are chosen by God and special to Him.

APPLY:

Let's reflect back on that earlier question about the rejection we've faced in our life.

How often do we try to gain our value in life by being special in the world? How often do we try to find our value from the people of the world? How often does our self worth depend on our wealth, or our family, or our education, or our achievements? And we are often so disappointed because we don't receive the acceptance and praise that we desire or think we deserve? Yet there is God, the whole time, saying: 'You belong to me. I chose you. And **I** treasure you. The world may reject you, but I **chose** you, I **treasure** you, I **accept** you.'

So as God's special possession, what is our purpose? Let's look at the rest of verse 9:

"...that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light."

To declare His praise. That's our purpose. To praise the one who brought us from darkness to light. From death to life. From the kingdom of this world to his heavenly kingdom. Our purpose as the ones chosen by God, as his priests, as his holy nation, as his special possession, is to declare His praises.

If we are members of God's church, God has chosen us to declare his praises. But why? For two reasons:

1. So people will hear. So people will hear about the God who has saved us. So people will hear about Him and might come to know Him. God wants people to know who he is and what he has done. He wants people to be saved. And he chooses us to tell people, by declaring his praises.
2. We praise Him because God deserves our praise! It is, simply, who he is. He is the one who deserves praise. He deserves to be praised for what he's done and what he's doing and what he will do, and he deserves to be praised for who He is.

Members – are you a member?

So are you a member of God's Church, of Christ's body? Are you his priest? Part of his holy nation and his special possession? And if you are, then do you declare His praises? Let me finish by quoting these verses from the Psalms – a great example of seeing the heart of people who declare God's praises – just as we are called to do:

Psalms 95:1 - **1**Come, let us sing for joy to the Lord; let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation.

Psalms 96:1-3 - **1**Sing to the Lord a new song; sing to the Lord, all the earth.

2Sing to the Lord, praise his name; proclaim his salvation day after day.

3Declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous deeds among all peoples.

Psalms 98:1 - **1**Sing to the Lord a new song, for he has done marvelous things; his right hand and his holy arm have worked salvation for him.

Psalms 101:1 - **1**I will sing of your love and justice; to you, Lord, I will sing praise.

This is how we declare his praises. With our voices, with our heart. With our actions. Let's declare his praises now...